

WHAT IS AFIX?

AFIX is a quality improvement strategy to raise immunization coverage levels and improve standards of practices at the provider level. This four-part dynamic strategy stands for **A**ssessment of immunization coverage of public and private providers, **F**eedback of diagnostic information to improve service delivery, **I**ncentives to recognize and reward improved performance, and **eX**change of information among providers.

The *Standards for Pediatric Immunization Practices* emphasize the use of assessment and feedback techniques, recommending that .Providers conduct semi-annual audits to assess immunization coverage levels and to review immunization records in the patient populations they serve...The results of such assessments should be discussed by providers as part of their ongoing quality assurance reviews and used to develop solutions to the problems identified..

Assessment and feedback, a data-driven approach to determine provider performance, acts as a catalyst for providers to devise solutions to improve coverage levels. Assessment of performance enables providers to determine how well they are doing through systematic, routine examination of client records. The data collected through these assessments can then be used to diagnose potential problems relating to service delivery and office policies.

Presenting this kind of information to motivate providers to improve their practices is known as feedback. This process can be defined in broader terms to include methods that stimulate competition among provider sites, encourage provider participation and mutual support, recognize successful solutions, and promote the exchange of results and ideas.

The AFIX approach provides a quality assurance measure for public and private immunization providers, presents an excellent educational opportunity, initiates private and public partnerships, and increases awareness among immunization providers.

This method has proven to be a powerful motivator and can significantly increase immunization coverage rates and improve clinical practices relating to service delivery. All immunization programs are encouraged to conduct at least annual assessments of public clinics and Community/Migrant Health Centers using the Clinic Assessment Software Application (CASA) developed by CDC or similar software. Many programs have begun routine assessment of private physician practices and managed care organizations as a way of reaching other high-risk children. Standardized collection, analysis and feedback of information can assist providers to diagnose service delivery problems, make improvements in policies and procedures, and evaluate the effectiveness of their interventions.